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Indiana Department of Labor
Bureau of Child Labor

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Teen Work Hours Roll Back as Education Shifts to Classroom

Indianapolis, IN – The Indiana Department of Labor is reminding employers around the state that Labor Day and the new school year bring reduced work hours for teens. Both state and federal labor laws limit the number of hours teens may work during the school year. With the reduction in work hours, comes the traditional shift from on-the-job-training to classroom education. The department is urging employers to watch the number of hours that its teen employees are working, and teens to seek out employers that are committed to putting education first.

According to Pete Rimsans, deputy commissioner of labor in charge of the bureau of child labor, "Studies have shown that on average teens that work up to 20 hours a week actually see improved grades. However, these same studies have also shown that teens that work over 20 hours a week tend to have declining grades, and those that work close to 40 hours a week have a propensity to drop out." Rimsans says that parents, teens, and employers should keep these trends in mind when making decisions about work hours.

While it is important for employers to consider these thresholds when scheduling teens, employers are reminded that state and federal regulations do outline specific limits to the number of hours that teens may work. During the school year, 14 and 15-years-olds may not work more than three hours a day and 18 hours a week; and they may not work after 7:00 p.m. Teenagers who are 16 or 17 years of age may not work more than 30 hours per week or eight hours per day. In general, 16 and 17-year-olds may not work later than 10:00

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p.m. However, if the employer has written permission from the minor's parent, 16-year-olds may work until midnight on nights not followed by a school day and 17-year-olds may work until 1:00 a.m. on no more than two nights per week. Also, all teens working six or more consecutive hours are also required by law to receive one or two breaks totaling 30 minutes.

In addition to abiding by the child labor regulations, some Indiana employers have chosen to go a step further. In 2001, the Indiana Department of Labor joined the Restaurant and Hospitality Association of Indiana (RHA) in launching the Education First program. This program enlists employers that pledge to help teens make education their first priority. These are employers that have pledged to: offer flexible hours to accommodate the teen workers' school activities, coordinate late hours with teen workers and parents, work closely with the teen workers' schools to assure grades and attendance remain in good standing, provide a safe and healthy working environment for teen workers, and comply with all federal and state labor regulations.

For more information about Indiana's teen work laws or the Education First program call 1-888 TEEN WORK or log onto www.teenworker.org. Information about becoming an Education First employer can be found at www.indianarestaurants.org/EducationFirst.asp.

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Available on the Internet at <http://www.state.in.us/labor/childlabor/news.html>
